DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 480 377 PS 031 505

TITLE	UNESCO Policy Briefs on Early Childhood, 2002.
INSTITUTION	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France). Early Childhood and Family Education Unit.
REPORT NO	No-1-8
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	18p.
AVAILABLE FROM	UNESCO, Early Childhood & Family Education Section, 7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France. Tel: 33-1-45-68-08-15; Fax: 33-1-45-68-56-26; e-mail: sh.choi@unesco.org; Web site: http://www.unesco.org.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Bilingual Education; *Child Care; Data Collection; *Developed Nations; *Developing Nations; *Early Childhood Education; Educational Change; Educational Policy; Employed Parents; Government Role; Mothers; Social Change; Trend Analysis
IDENTIFIERS	Brazil; Home Based Programs; Papua New Guinea; Sweden

ABSTRACT

This document consists of eight double-sided briefs addressing aspects of the field of early childhood education. Titles of the briefs are as follows: (1) "Early Childhood Care? Development? Education?," outlining the distinctions between these terms; (2) "Planning for Access: Develop a Data System First," highlighting Brazil's census to collect baseline data on child care centers and preschools as a first step to broadening early childhood education beyond pre-primary; (3) "Integrating Early Childhood into Education: The Case of Sweden," on that country's transition to a preschool system serving 1-5 year olds with a national curriculum, and expansion of entitlement to preschool education; (4) "Women, Work, and Early Childhood: The Nexus in Developed and Developing Countries (I) [and] (II)," on the relationship between women and the labor force in developed nations and developing nations and government policy for supporting young children and their working parents; (5) "Home-Based Early Childhood Services: The Case of New Zealand," summarizing key details and implications of participation and administration of New Zealand's home-based services; (6) "Papua New Guinea's Vernacular Language Preschool Programme," on that nation's reform of the country's English-only educational system and subsequent bilingual education policy; and (8) "Social Transformations and Their Implications for the Global Demand for ECCE," on trends likely to dramatically affect demand for early childhood care and education. (HTH)

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UNESCO Policy Briefs on Early Childhood, No. 1-8, 2002.

United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Early Childhood & Family Education Section

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United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

n°1 / March 2002

UNESCO Policy Briefs on Early Childhood

Early Childhood Care? Development? Education?

The field of Early Childhood[1] goes by various names, in different countries as well as within individual countries, where different stakeholders may use different references. Nor do international agencies have a commonly agreed-upon term, sparking debate when an inter-agency document is drafted over which name to use. Researchers have tried to unify the field with a single label, but without success.

Primary education also has different names (It is called elementary or basic education)[2], but unlike with Early Childhood, there is a relatively common understanding of what it refers to and the way in which it is delivered. The terms attached to Early Childhood go beyond mere labels: they imply different purposes, pedagogical practices and forms of delivery, not to mention the varying social and economic status of the personnel involved. The variety of terms is so broad that the very identity of Early Childhood as a distinctive discipline is often questioned.

One commonly used name, *Early Childhood Education* (ECE), is favoured by education authorities or others who are inclined to see early childhood from an educational point of view. Learning is central to this tradition. *Early Childhood Care and Education* (ECCE) is an expansion of ECE, with the care component added. Or the order can be changed to *Early Childhood Education and Care* (ECEC) to keep the emphasis on education. Then there is *Early Childhood Care* (ECC) without the education component. In the developing world, ECC tends to be associated with attention to the child's health, nutrition and hygiene, while in the developed world, it is often understood as a social service for working mothers with young children. Historically, ECC has also been associated with institutionalised social services for disadvantaged children, whereas ECE has been considered a service devoted to the child's early learning process.[3] In an effort to assert the inseparability of ECC and ECE, researchers have coined the word *Educare*. But this term has remained mainly within the academic community and has not entered the policy discourse of governments.[4]

Early Childhood Development (ECD) is another term whose popularity is increasing. It emphasises a holistic approach attending to the child's physical, emotional, social as well as cognitive development. Though elusive, by being comprehensive, and focusing on the child, not on the social agent or on the process of care or education, ECD is gaining ground as one of the most generic terms for the field. A common variant of this term is *Early Childhood Care and Development* (ECCD), which again tries to span the divide between care and development/education. Yet another variant is *Early Childhood Care for Development* which places the emphasis on the care which affects development and learning.

Several other terms are in use, but they are either variations or different combinations of the three key concepts – early childhood care, development and education – or specific programmes that are arranged for them (e.g., pre-school education for ECE).

From the child development perspective, these three concepts cannot be treated independently of one another. Early child development encompasses a series of learning processes during which the child learns about the environment and himself/herself. That the child's survival and growth has to be assured by appropriate provision of health and nutritional care goes without saying. But the young child's physical growth should also be accompanied by an appropriate learning process. Learning and growth cannot occur in sequence. They are integral parts of the process of nurturing a child's holistic development.

In reality, ECC, ECD, and ECE are not invariably institutionalised or practised separately. For instance, one can easily find a Department of Early Childhood Education responsible for the entire gamut of early childhood programmes including day care centres for children under three and kindergarten education for older children. In most of the developed countries, kindergarten education is child-centred, stressing the child's holistic development. In such cases, the need for a distinction between ECE and ECD would not arise. In some countries in transition[5], pre-

[1] Early Childhood is capitalised to distinguish it as an area of profession and discipline from early childhood as the early period in one's life cycle.
[2] In some cases, elementary education refers only to the early grades of primary education, and the latter is reserved for the upper grades. Likewise, basic education can embrace other levels of education below and above primary education as well as other non-formal programmes.
[3] See Haddad, L. (forthcoming), An Integrated Approach to Early Childhood Education and Care. *UNESCO Early Childhood and Family Policy Series.*

[4] An exception is found in South Africa. *Educare* is used along with Early Childhood Development. (http://www.isisa.co.za/isisa/esst/default.htm)
[5] In the former Soviet Union.

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school education is a generic term for early childhood programmes including those for children under three, which would be categorised as ECC in other countries.

Different labels become an issue in institutional politics. For agencies, the preference for one term over another is closely linked to the institutional mandate they are expected to fulfil. Such discrepancies that exist among agencies – not their understanding of child psychology or development – are often difficult to reconcile. At the country level, the education ministry may prefer ECE because it is easier to justify involvement and investment in education rather than in the care of small children. If the ministry makes a distinction between ECE and ECC or ECD, it may be because it intends to assign different responsibilities to the different areas. In this regard, it is no mere coincidence that in some developing countries ECD is often accompanied by community mobilisation strategies soliciting contributions from the community, while ECE gets priority in government funding. Educators working outside the field of ECE are less likely to be called teachers, since such a label would imply a certain level of remuneration by the government, which is unavailable, in most developing countries.

Given the multifaceted nature of early childhood, the existence of several labels may be inevitable. The range of the institutional interests is such that it may, in fact, be a futile attempt to seek a unifying label. Meanwhile, the same term or name can be interpreted differently in different social, cultural and linguistic contexts. And depending on school starting age, the concept of early childhood, or 'early childhood' as a policy construct varies. Thus comparing, let alone unifying, different names may be an elusive effort. In this regard, insistence on a common name may not be a constructive effort and what is needed would be an understanding of the common scope of Early Childhood. In making international comparisons, what is crucial would be an operational definition that can characterise countries' policies regardless of the terms being used. More importantly, the focus on names for Early Childhood may divert attention from other equally important issues, such as how early childhood services, however they may be called, are related to otheredu cational and social services for school age children.

But labelling aside, certain fundamentals stand out.

First, the ultimate concern of any early childhood programme should be the wellbeing and holistic development of the child, and regardless of the institutional setting, the programme should embody a developmentally appropriate practice, which attends to health, nutrition, security and learning. In fact, as long as such a holistic approach is practised, the physical or institutional setting of a programme is of little importance. Second, as children grow, they can move from one programme to anothert hat may be named differently or located in different ministries. But the programmes must maintain between them a pedagogical, if not necessarily an institutional, continuity and integrity. Third, overlap between differently named programmes for the same age group must be co-ordinated as much as possible. Such overlap can cause administrative inefficiency and be wasteful of resources. Last, butn ot least, regardless of what label is accorded, the programme preceding a child's primary education should be designed to facilitate the child's preparation for and transition to formal schooling. Pedagogical continuity between the last year of an early childhood programme and the first year of formal schooling is of great importance.

The issue of labelling is not purely conceptual to be discussed from the point of view of childdev elopment theories. Rather, it is inextricably related, among others, to institutional responsibilities and the mandates of the stakeholders involved, which cannot be handled effectively without a clear policy stance on Early Childhood. Preparing a government-wide position or a position that can be subscribed to by all stakeholders vis-à-vis the labels to be used may be a good starting point for policy development for Early Childhood.

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United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

n°2 / April 2002

UNESCO Policy Briefs on Early Childhood

Planning for Access: Develop a Data System First

Ask officials at the education ministry of a developing country how they plan to improve access to early childhood services. They will most likely point to efforts to boost enrolment rates in pre-primary education[1] for children over three, and create more kindergartens, pre-schools and the like.

True, many education ministries are aware of the difficulties of reaching even the older children through the formal system and are exploring non-formal alternatives.[2] They are also developing plans for younger children under three. Nevertheless, most early childhood policy regarding access concentrates, at least in terms of investment priorities, on expanding pre-primary education for children over three.[3]

In some countries, the mandate of the education ministry for Early Childhood[4] is still limited to pre-primary education. In this case, the adherence to pre-primary education would be a matter of principle. In others, where the mandate has been expanded to embrace other age groups and non-formal programmes, the policy would be a reflection of the ministry's conscious prioritisation of investment made in favour of pre-primary education.

Both cases point to political unwillingness as one of the causes of the policy direction. However, the experience of the Brazilian Ministry of Education suggest that the problem may reside not so much in a lack of willingness to develop a more comprehensive policy, but, among others, in the education ministries' limited data[5] system to expand the purview of Early Childhood beyond pre-primary education.

In 1996, the ministerial auspices for Day Care Centres (for children 0-3) and Pre-schools (for children 4-6) in Brazil were integrated under the Ministry of Education.[6] One of the first steps in implementing this broader mandate was to collect data on these services. In 1997, the Ministry's annual school census included data on a few Day Care Centres linked to schools. In 2000, the Ministry conducted a nationwide survey to collect baseline data on early childhood education, the first of its kind by the Ministry. Significantly, the survey covered not only Pre-schools, but also Day Care Centres serving children under three.

The data on Day Care Centres were incomplete, because the survey could not map all centres across the country. Nevertheless, the partial baseline data helped the Ministry embrace the entire 0-6 age groups and services catering for them within the purview of its policy planning. The Ministry acknowledged that the data played an important role in this process.

Most important, before carrying out the survey, the Ministry revised legal guidelines for early childhood institutions, which helped register and accredit Day Care Centres as well as other services that had been outside the orbit of government administration. Thanks to this exercise, Day Care Centres could be surveyed and eventually included in the Ministry's national policy purview of Early Childhood.

The Brazilian experience may not be unique, but it illustrates two important points.

First, the Ministry sought to develop a comprehensive data set covering the 0-6 age group before embarking on policy development. Notably, it was among the first tasks it undertook upon being given its expanded mandate.[7] Second, it paid attention to the system development for

[1] In this note, pre-primary education is defined as a school- or centre-based educational programme for children over three (or two, in some cases), following the definition of the International Standard Classification of Education on pre-primary education or ISCED-0.

[2] For instance, in Cuba, the Ministry of Education has an integrated system for children of 0-6 years of age, which includes community-based organised parental education programmes for children under three.

[3] The access problem for children under three is also raised in developed countries, with important exceptions of some Nordic countries which have extended entitlement to places for children under three years.

[4] Early Childhood is capitalised to distinguish it as a profession and discipline as regard to early childhood as the early period in one's life cycle.

[5] Including both quantitative and qualitative data.

[6] In fact, in 1988 the Federal Constitution declared that early childhood education is a right of every child and its provision the duty of the State and family, and mentioned both Day Care Centres, which were under the Ministry of Social Affairs, and Pre-schools within the purview of the Education Chapter. But it was only with the introduction of the Guidelines for National Education (Law 9394), or *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional – LDB* in 1996 that the Ministry of Education became the responsible authority for both services. Importantly, the provision responsibility for early childhood services is with the municipalities.

[7] Even before the Survey, which was conducted in 2000, the Ministry carried out some initiatives for Day Care Centres. For example, it had developed curriculum, accreditation, operation and training guidelines for early childhood services including Day Care Centres. But no significant policy planning for access or financing for Day Care Centres had been launched before the Survey.

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identifying and recognising the Day Care Centres before proceeding to collect data on them.

This policy prioritisation is noteworthy because more often than not, early childhood policies are developed without the support of sound data. This is not to say that the needs for early childhood services cannot be grasped without data. In some countries, they are too obvious to ignore even if there are little data that can attest to them. But being aware that there are needs to be addressed is one thing, and addressing those needs through concrete actions is another. The latter requires political awareness followed by specific policy discourse, planning and financial commitment, for which obtaining such an essential policy tool as data is essential.

While policy makers may accord equal importance to data and policy development, they may underestimate the importance of the former as a pre-requisite for the latter. Likewise, concerning data development in Early Childhood, the focus is typically on the reliability or validity of data or on the development of indicators, with insufficient attention paid to developing a system through which the target services, including those at the grassroots level, can be identified, recognised and supported administratively. In the case of Brazil, the value of data as a tool and the need for improving the basic system infrastructure for data collection, such as registration of services, were well recognised.

Whether or not such improved data system will eventually lead to a comprehensive policy plan on access in the case of Brazil remains to be seen. The question hinges upon, in general, many other factors such as the availability of sufficient resources. For instance, in order to encourage unofficial services to register, some incentive (e.g., tax relief, support, training opportunities, and recognition) may have to be found. To promote an integrated approach to Early Childhood, ministries would also need to develop equally integrated systems for funding, curriculum, training and provision of services. In fact, UNESCO's recent studies[8] show that what is critical, yet difficult to achieve, in establishing an integrated early childhood system is to develop an integrated curriculum and a training system for all types of educators. Most importantly, an integrated system would not be established without necessary co-ordination with other ministries.

But in the case of Brazil, the approach seems to have worked to the extent that the Ministry sought to embrace Early Childhood beyond pre-primary education and brought the services and age groups that were not under its responsibility to the policy discourse of Early Childhood. And this task of bringing the reality that needs policy attention to the arena of public discourse at all is the first, and perhaps one of the most important, steps towards an integrated system of Early Childhood.

Governments, professionals and development agencies have all tried to address the problems of the education ministries' policy for Early Childhood,[9] seeking better ways to expend the limited public resources available for the area. Brain research has been cited for the importance of young children's access to care and education from their earliest years of life. Reference has also been made to the global Education for All campaigns and related declarations to revise the formalist view of Early Childhood. Though these advocacy efforts have not been futile, they have not generally succeeded in altering the policy direction. One of the reasons could have been the inadequate preparation of the very first step: Developing an integrated, comprehensive data system for Early Childhood.

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[8] Podmore, V., & Meade, A. (April). Early childhood education policy co-ordination under the auspices of the Department/ Ministry of Education: A case study of New Zealand. *UNESCO Early Childhood and Family Policy Series, Number 1.* / Taguchi, H., & Munkhammar, I. (Forthcoming). An integrated early childhood policy system: The case study of Sweden. *UNESCO Early Childhood and Family Policy Series, Number 2.* / Rayna, S. (Forthcoming) La mise en oeuvre de la politique integrée de la petite enfance au Sénégal. *UNESCO Early Childhood and Family Policy Series, Number 3.*

[9] It has been criticised that the policy does not pay attention to children under three and children in disadvantaged circumstances. Also criticised are the policy's neglect of the care aspects of child development (e.g., health and nutrition) and parent education, which should be an integral part of early childhood policy and a strategic means of expanding access to quality early childhood environments at home. It must also be noted that the policy also focuses on the availability of services, but availability is only one aspect of access. The new services should also be accessible – within the practical reach of the target children and their parents, and more importantly, affordable. There should also be services for children with special needs and for all age groups.

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

n°3 / May 2002

UNESCO Policy Briefs on Early Childhood

Integrating Early Childhood Into Education: The Case of Sweden

In 1996, the government responsibility for Childcare[1] in Sweden was transferred from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to the Ministry of Education and Science. In the process, Pre-school Classes were introduced for 6-year-olds as part of the compulsory school system,[2] sharing the same curriculum with primary schools. Pre-school, which had catered for 1-6-year-olds before the transition, became the first level of the country's education system serving 1-5-year-olds,[3] with its own national curriculum.[4] The government also expanded the entitlement to pre-school education, offering it to all children regardless of their parents' employment status.[5] Another reform bridged pedagogical gaps among different categories of teachers by providing a uniform framework of training for pre-school teachers, school teachers and leisure time pedagogues.[6] The rules and regulations of childcare in Sweden are now legislated under the School Act.

The transition was relatively simple and went smoothly in its final stages.[7] But the preliminary stages provoked debate and apprehension. One source of resistance was a fear that pre-school would become formalised, as has been the case in other countries. Academics worried that pre-school pedagogy would lose its emphasis on play, children's natural learning strategies and their holistic development. Those working in the care sector feared that the focus of pre-school activities might shift heavily to education and interpreted the integration as a threat to their profession. It was also feared that childcare, which had enjoyed a high priority under the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs as a family support policy, would lose its primacy and become marginalised in the education sector.

Observations so far suggest a mixed result. Some formalisation did occur, but there are also signs that fears were exaggerated. As far as the pre-school class for 6-year-olds, set up in schools, is concerned, the influence of school pedagogy has been evident. A national evaluation study reveals that teachers organise their activities in a formal way, based on their notion of what formal schooling may or should look like. In some cases, their notion of formal schooling has been found to be more rigid than that of the primary school teachers. The national education authority is making recommendations to correct these problems, encouraging pre-school teachers to pay more attention to children's holistic development. However, such formalisation has not been observed in pre-schools for 1-5-year-olds. On the contrary, with the shift of 6-year-olds to pre-school classes, pre-schools, freed of responsibility for pre-primary education, have been able to concentrate on more development-based approaches in activities for 1-5-year-olds.[8]

On the investment front, in addition to the free pre-school class for 6-year-olds,[9] the government recently announced two important measures to lower pre-school fees[10] and to provide free pre-school education for all 4-5-year-olds starting in 2003, confirming its commitment to universalising pre-school education. These measures have allayed fears that pre-school education would be a low investment priority in the education sector. On the contrary, as pre-school education has become integrated into the education system, the argument that it should be available to all children, as a child's right rather than as a parents' right, has gained further legitimacy and resulted in increased public investment.

Moreover, primary schools are becoming more "pre-school-like," concerned with students' holistic development. Although the conventional concept of schooling still prevails, it is generally

[1] Childcare in Sweden refers to both pre-school activities for children between 1 and 5 and childcare services for school-age children between 6 and 12.

[2] The decision was more a renaming of existing pre-primary education than a creation of a new programme. Under the 1975 National Pre-school Act, municipalities were required to provide all 6-year-olds with at least 525 hours per year of pre-schooling; most 6-year-olds in Sweden have attended this pre-primary education programme in pre-schools. With the decision, this programme became Pre-school Class and detached from pre-schools. Pre-school class is no longer part of pre-school education, a term which is now reserved for early childhood care and education for 1-5-year-olds only.

[3] In Sweden, childcare services outside the home start with 1-year-old, and the younger infants are taken care of at home by their own parents who benefit from the government's parental leave system.

[4] Pre-school activities in Sweden are also provided in Family Day Care Homes and Open Pre-schools. But these services are not part of the education system and not guided by the National Pre-school Curriculum.

[5] Since 2001, children of unemployed parents also have the right to three hours of pre-school education a day. Before, only the children of working or student parents had access to pre-school education. Children with special needs have always enjoyed priority entitlement.

[6] Before, pre-school teachers and leisure time pedagogues received three years of training at the university, while the training period for school teachers was three and a half years. Now these different different categories of teachers all receive the same length of three and a half years of training at the university.

[7] At the central level, the transition involved the transfer of the early childhood department at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to the Ministry of Education and Science, which took place without much conflict. At the local level, the change was even less dramatic, as the municipalities already had integrated administrative structures, such as joint councils for pre-schools and schools. The decentralisation process, under which the municipality became the employer of teachers at both pre-schools and schools, is also said to have facilitated the integration.

[8] The new national pre-school curriculum puts emphasis on learning, which the pre-schools teachers find as something "new." But there are few signs that this emphasis on learning has overshadowed the pre-school's child-development-based approaches and pedagogical practices.

[9] Participation in the pre-school classes is voluntary, but municipalities are obliged to provide a place, free of charge, for children who demand it. Children whose parents are working or studying or those who require care for special needs receive entitlement.

[10] By setting the maximum fee that all municipalities can charge for pre-school schools for 1-5-year-olds, the government equalised fee differences among municipalities. The measure effectively lowered pre-school fees for all families.

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agreed that today's Swedish schools are increasingly seen as places where school-age children are being cared for in a holistic manner while their parents are working. More and more, schools are becoming a substitute home for school-age children, as pre-schools have been for younger children, where teachers and childcare workers collaborate to ensure the students' holistic development. In the past, students' behavioural, emotional, social and health problems were sidelined in schools and not considered the concern of teachers, whose main job was to look after "educational" matters. But nowadays, teachers have begun to talk about students' developmental status and progress as well as their academic achievements and increasingly see the need for cooperating with parents more closely.

Such upward integration – in which pre-schools are influencing schools – is surprising, at least to outsiders, since the opposite is normally what is expected. It is also significant in that it signals the beginning of long-awaited changes in schools in favour of a lifelong learning framework that puts a great emphasis on learners. As much as it is surprising and significant, it is also complex in terms of the manner in which it took place. It is the result of a host of policy measures stemming not only from the education sector but also from the social and economic sectors, not to mention financial and ideological factors. The reforms and their consequences must be understood in this broader context. But significantly, the upward integration was, after all, a *policy goal* set and pursued explicitly by the government, as illustrated below.

In the 1980s when the government tried to lower the school starting age, people objected, seeing the idea as an attempt to shorten early childhood, which Swedes regard as a golden time of life. This proposal was rejected, and the approach taken since has been to import pre-school pedagogy to schools rather than extend school education to young children. In 1991, when the Bill on Flexible School Starting Age was legislated, allowing 6-year-olds to start schooling if their parents wish them to, the then education minister emphasised that children's holistic development should be a concern for all teachers, stressing that holistic development was important for the youngest students as well as their older peers. In 1996 when the prime minister announced his vision of lifelong learning for Sweden, he stated that pre-school education should be a part of the country's lifelong learning vision and that it should influence school education, at least in the first years.

Such public statements were matched with concrete policy actions to bring pre-school pedagogy into primary schools. A national study conducted in 1994, "The Foundation of Lifelong Learning: A Child-Mature School," urged Swedish schools to become more responsive to children's individual learning needs and styles. It argued that integrating pre-schools with schools would allow the former to transform the latter. This point was duly taken into consideration in the revision of the school curriculum,[11] which took on many pedagogical practices of pre-schools. *Learning* came to replace *teaching*, shifting the focus from teachers to students or learners. Artistic expressions and play, central to pre-school activities, were recognised as important means of learning and communication for school-age children. By setting these as the pedagogical goals of school, the revised curriculum facilitated the upward integration.

Early childhood care and education is often seen as the last frontier to be conquered in order to complete the picture of an education system promoting lifelong learning,[12] which must start from birth. From this point of view, early childhood is a missing link, since in most cases it is not part of a country's education system or lifelong learning vision. The Swedish experience shows that this missing link has a potential to galvanise a country's efforts to make schools more learner-centred, to bring about a paradigm shift in education, in which *care*, *development* and *learning* will no longer be foreign concepts alongside *education*. But integration need not be a matter of finding the missing link and fitting it into an existing framework or, of one sector absorbing another – notably, schools taking over pre-schools. It is possible for schools and pre-schools to build a common vision of childhood, care, development and learning.

More importantly, the Swedish reform of childcare challenges us to go beyond early childhood and develop a new, holistic approach to working with children that will embrace their development and learning according to a seamless concept of childhood, from birth to 18 years of age,[13] in which early childhood is an integral, indispensable part.

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[11] The revision was necessitated to cover pre-school classes for 6-year-olds and the Leisure Time Centres, a major form of childcare service for school-age children integrated into schools in 1991.

[12] The (formal) education system is a subset of a lifelong learning system, which involves non only formal but also non-formal and informal learning.

[13] Definition of a child as stated in the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

* This text is prepared on the basis of a UNESCO case study on Sweden's integrated early childhood system undertaken by Hillevi Lenz Taguchi, Stockholm Institute of Education, and Ingmarie Munkammar, Luleå University of Technology.

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

n°4 / June 2002

UNESCO Policy Briefs on Early Childhood

Women, Work, and Early Childhood: The Nexus in Developed and Developing Countries (I)

The topic is treated in two parts, continuing in the next issue. The first part covers the relationship between women in the labour force and government policy for supporting young children and their working parents. The hypothesis is that the relationship may not be so pronounced in developing countries as it has been in developed countries, given the differing employment status of working mothers in the two regions. Data from developed countries are presented and discussed, while data on female employment in developing countries and a discussion of implications for early childhood and family support policies will be presented in the next issue.

Early childhood care and education (ECCE) and family benefits and services (FBS)[1] for parents with young children in industrialised countries have developed in tandem with increased female participation in the labour market. As more mothers work outside the home, the question arises of how to take care of young children left at home.

Government responses to the need and demand for ECCE-FBS in developed countries have varied, however. Those with a strong conviction concerning gender equality and social democracy (e.g., the Nordic countries) have responded swiftly and positively with measures to reconcile the needs of work and family. But countries with liberal and market-oriented ideologies (e.g., the US, UK and Australia) have tended, until recently, to leave the matter up to individual families, minimising government involvement. Approaches also vary: Some countries have focused on supporting parents (both mothers and fathers), others on providing services for children.

Female employment is certainly not the only factor influencing the development of ECCE-FBS in industrialised countries. Child protection was an important concern in the early 20th century, as were the enhancement of child development and the need to prepare children for primary school. Recently, the growing value placed on education as the foundation of the child's lifelong learning has driven many developed countries to step up their policy attention to ECCE-FBS.

At a minimum, the presence of more working mothers raised governments' awareness of the issues surrounding ECCE-FBS, which were previously considered to be of private concern. In many cases, growing female labour forces led governments to examine the ECCE-FBS issue more closely across sectors at the public policy level.[2] To be sure, rising female employment is among the most frequently mentioned rationales for government involvement in ECCE-FBS.[3]

With the greying and shrinking of their populations, the expansion of their service sectors and rising levels of women's education, developed countries are likely to see female employment rise even more rapidly, and policies to reconcile work and family responsibilities will continue to be critical to their economic and social strategies.[4] The causality between female employment and the expansion of ECCE-FBS is difficult to quantify, but the interrelationship is indisputable.

Can the same pattern be expected in developing countries, with increased female employment spurring government concern and support for ECCE-FBS? Before answering this question, one particular aspect of the link between female employment and ECCE-FBS must be understood. The fact is that the perceived demand for ECCE-FBS does not arise with all types of female employment, but mainly with that which requires the mother to be absent from home and which makes it impossible for her to be a full-time caretaker at home. Speaking in terms of employment status, wage/salaried employment is more likely to increase the perceived demand for ECCE-FBS than self-employed or contributing/unpaid family work.[5]

This, of course, does not mean that mothers in non-wage jobs, employed around the house or in the neighbourhood, do not have the need for ECCE-FBS. In fact any working mother, regardless of the type of work she does, has the burden of combining the two responsibilities, at least more than a father would in the same situation. And given the greater hardships often associated with non-wage work (e.g., longer, irregular hours, labour-intensive work, seasonal, low-paying situations), not to mention the poverty factor, the need for ECCE-FBS among mothers in self-employed or in unpaid family work would be equal to if not greater than that of mothers in wage jobs.

But a distinction must be made between demand and need for ECCE-FBS. A need does not necessarily translate into a demand, unless the agent responsible for supply is led to perceive the need and feel liable for meeting the need. In this regard, wage work is

[1] Maternity, paternity, parental leaves, tax benefits, child allowances, etc.

[2] Callister, P., & Podmore, V.N. (1995). *Striking a balance: Families, work and early childhood education*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Education Research.

[3] Olmsted, P., & Weikart, D. (1989). *How nations serve young children: Profiles of child care and education in 14 countries*. Michigan: The High/Scope Press. / *OECD Country Notes (1999), Early Childhood Education and Care Policy* in the Netherlands, Portugal, the US, and Sweden. http://www.oecd.org / *Starting Strong: Early childhood education and care* (2001). Paris: OECD.

[4] *OECD Employment Outlook* (2001). Paris: OECD.

[5] These are three broad categories of employment status recognised by ILO. "Employees are all those workers who hold the type of job defined as paid employees, where the incumbents hold explicit or implicit employment contracts which give them a basic remuneration which is not directly dependent upon the revenue of the unit for which they work." Self-employed are "jobs where the remuneration is directly dependent upon the profits derived from the goods and services produced and in this capacity have engaged one or more persons to work for them." Contributing family workers are "who hold a self employment job in a market oriented establishment operated by a related person living in the same household." Unpaid family worker works " without pay in a business operated by a related person who lives in the same household." A high proportion of own-account workers operating their own economic enterprise indicates slow growth in the formal sector and rapid growth of the informal sector. A high proportion of unpaid family workers is associated with slow development, a weak job market and a rural economy. An economy with a large informal sector tends to have a higher proportion of self-employment and unpaid family work (*Key Indicators of the Labour Market 2001-02*. Geneva: ILO).

more advantageous than self-employed or contributing/unpaid family work in that it is more likely to be recognised as work. In addition, it takes place in an environment where collective action and negotiation for workers' welfare is possible and more frequent. From this point of view, if the mother is employed around the house or in the neighbourhood, despite the need on her part, the perceived demand for ECCE-FBS would not be so great as it would if her workplace is located away from home.

From the sole perspective of female employment status,[6] the question of whether developing countries will follow the same pattern as developed countries in ECCE-FBS issues seems to have both *Yes* and *No* answers. Labour market researchers predict that developing countries will eventually follow a similar pattern of changes in labour force participation to that of developed countries.[7] Data show that female workers in developing countries are indeed moving away from the informal sector (e.g., agriculture) to manufacturing, services and commerce, out of unpaid family workers status and into wage employment.[8] It is thus predicted that the number of women working outside the home in developing countries will also eventually increase, with a corresponding increase in the perceived need and, importantly, demand for ECCE-FBS.

However, the linkage between female employment and government support for ECCE-FBS in developing countries is likely to solidify more slowly. This prognosis has little to do with the actual size of the female labour force in developed and developing countries, as there is no particular difference. For example, in 1998, the female labour force as a percentage of total labour force in low-income, middle-income, low and middle-income and high-income countries was 40.6%, 38.6%, 40.1%, and 42.9%, respectively.[9]

Concerning the *status* of female employment, however, a wide gap is seen between North and South which is expected to underlie a difference in perceived demand for ECCE-FBS between the two regions. In developed countries, most women work in wage jobs, while in developing countries, especially in Asia-Pacific and in Africa, [illegible] are assumed to have contributing/unpaid family worker status. In developed countries, women's participation in the labour market began with paid jobs in factories, offices and service activities that sprang up as industrialisation swept across most of Western Europe and North America in the early 20th century. As shown in Table 1 below, as early as the 1940s and 1950s, most female workers in developed countries already had salaried status.

Table 1: Economically Active Female Population by Industry Division in Selected Developed Countries (1946-1960), as a % of all industry[10]

Country	Year	Industry Division			
		Employers /own account workers[11]	Employees / salaried	Unpaid family workers	Not classified
Finland	1960	8.9	64.7	26.2	-
France	1954	13.8	58.8	25.9	2.1
Germany	1961	7.3	70.6	22.0	-
Italy	1951	11.0	58.0	24.2	6.7
Norway	1946	11.5	88.4	-	-
Sweden	1950	10.6	83.8	5.1	0.4

Data source: Yearbook of labour statistics: Retrospective edition on population censuses 1945-1985 (1990). Geneva: ILO

In the case of Norway, 88.4% of economically active women were salaried workers in 1946, and this rate was reached even within an overall female labour force participation of less than 25%,[12] implying that salaried jobs were what drew early female workers to the labour market. It is also interesting to note that Norway and Sweden, two of the most advanced countries in terms of the government support for ECCE-FBS, had the highest rates of women working in salaried employment. In Sweden, the economically active female population with salaried status already reached 96.5% by 1985. According to recent OECD data, the proportion of female employment in unpaid family work is falling steadily in 11 out of 13 of its member countries.[13]

(to be continued in Brief no. 5)

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[6] The perceived demand for ECCE-FBS could also be influenced by the availability of other family members to care for children while their parents are away for work, cultural attitudes and traditions about women and their participation in the society, and the degree to which women perceive their status to come from being mothers, not to mention the country's ideological and political system.

[7] *Key Indicators of the Labour Market 2001-02*. Geneva: ILO.

[8] This trend is particularly pronounced in Latin America and the Caribbean.

[9] *World Development Indicators (2002)*. The World Bank. When the labour force participation rates of women aged between 25-54 years are compared, developing countries show even a higher rate than developed countries. The average of 21 developing countries in the Low Human Development status identified by Human Development Report 2001 (UNDP) in the year between 1995 and 2000 was 78.4%, whereas that of 24 developed countries in 1999/2000 (except Greece, of which data were from 1998) was 72%. Data calculated from *Key Indicators of the Labour Market 2001-02*. Geneva: ILO.

[10] Calculated from data provided in the Yearbook. Data from other developed countries, which are not included in the Table, show the same pattern.

[11] An employer/own account worker is a person who operates his/her own economic enterprise or engaged independently in a profession or trade.

[12] The rates of economically active female population as a percentage of the total in the other countries in the years shown were: 39.3% (Finland), 34% (France), 37% (Germany), 25.4% (Italy), and 29.7% (Sweden).

[13] In relevant time series data from 1990-1997, with a median of 1.3 % (Australia) in a range of from 0.2 % (in the US) to 24% (in Greece). Reference: *World Employment Report: Life at work in the information economy* (2001). Geneva: ILO, p. 21. Data: *OECD: Employment Outlook 2000*. Paris: OECD.

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n°5 / July–August 2002

UNESCO Policy Briefs on Early Childhood

Women, Work, and Early Childhood: The Nexus in Developed and Developing Countries (II)

(continued from Brief no. 4)

Most female workers in developing countries, particularly in Asia-Pacific and Africa, *do not* have wage jobs. Female workers in these regions work mostly in agriculture, with a status of unpaid family worker. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the majority of the economically active female population is in agriculture (68%).[1] In Asia and the Pacific, this trend is more pronounced the lower the income level of the country, with about 78% of female workers in least developed countries in the region employed in agriculture (Table 2).

Table 2: Female Labour Force by Industry Division in Asia and the Pacific (1990), as a % of all industry[2]

Income group	Industry Division		
	Agriculture	Industry	Services
Least developed	77.8	13.5	8.6
Low income	73.7	14.2	11.9
Middle income	65.7	15.3	18.8
High income	9.9	26.4	63.5
ESCAP[3] total	64.6	15.7	19.6

Reference: *Statistics on women in Asia and the Pacific* 1999. UN.
Data source: *Economically Active Population 1950-2010* (1996). Geneva: ILO. / *World Population Prospect: The 1998 Revision*, UN Population Division.

According to available data on employment status in some developing countries, female workers engaged in wage jobs make up less than 10% (Table 3). The preponderance of female workers in non-wage jobs, however, is not consistent across all developing countries. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the proportion of women who are unpaid family workers has dropped considerably, with most female workers now either wage earners or self-employed. But a burgeoning informal sector for female workers in this region[4] suggests that female workers counted as having wage status may in fact not be in regular employee situations, but in non-core situations, such as those working from home or domestic and casual workers.

Table 3: Female Employment by Status in Selected Developing Countries (1991-97), as a % of all employment status

Country	Year	Employment by Status		
		Wage/salaried	Self-employed	Contributing family workers
Bangladesh	1991	5.2	6.4	83.3
	1996	8.7	7.8	77.3
Benin	1992	2.6	63.8	28.6
Ethiopia	1994	4.0	25.4	69.6
	1999	6.8	33.1	59.5
Uganda	1991	4.6	25.4	53.3
	1994	6.7	39.1	54.0

Data source: *Key indicators of the labour market 2001-02*. Geneva: ILO.

The proportion of non-wage female workers in developing countries is assumed to be greater than suggested by available data. In most countries, statistics on the informal sector come solely from urban areas, and many rural women working informally are not counted. Furthermore, most women in developing countries are engaged in economic activities that do not normally figure in labour statistics or are not recognised as work at all, such as subsistence agriculture and housework. Although these activities are vital to society and to household economy, they have no recognised market value.

The main conclusions from these observations are, first, that mothers in the developing world cannot be assumed to be freely available to serve as full-time child caretakers and, second, that the demand for ECCE-FBS[5] is huge among working mothers in developing countries. This demand, however, is hidden.[6] In order to motivate governments to increase their involvement and investment in ECCE-FBS, this hidden demand must be exposed. To this end, labour force statistics should be made more gender-sensitive; specifically, by assigning market values to non-wage jobs and unpaid family work -- to the goods and services women produce at home (Myers, 1992).[7]

Data should also be available to show that mothers performing non-wage work are not fully available for childcare functions. The irony is that despite their difficulties, mothers in non-wage jobs, especially little-educated rural mothers engaged in agricultural work, tend

[1] *African Development Indicators* (2002). Washington, DC: The World Bank.
[2] Calculated from the data presented in the noted reference.
[3] The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the regional arm of the UN Secretariat for the Asian/Pacific region with 52 member states (and nine associated members).
[4] From 47.4% in 1990 to 50% in 1998. *World employment report: Life at work in the information economy* (2001). Geneva: ILO.
[5] Early childhood care and education (ECCE) and family benefits and services (FBS).
[6] In rural areas, the availability of relatives and grandparents also helps hide the demand for ECCE-FBS.
[7] Myers, R. (1992). *The twelve who survive*. London: Routledge.

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to combine work and family responsibilities more often than those in wage jobs.[8] Many of these women simply have no other choice, but their carrying of the double burden perpetuates the myth that "stay-at-home" mothers are available to take care of children and have no particular need for ECCE-FBS.

These observations have a few implications for ECCE-FBS policy in developing countries.

First, family support measures such as parental leave, granted in developed countries to parents of young children under age two[9], are unlikely to be available in developing countries, at least in the near future. The reason is that apart from obvious obstacles such as resource constraints, governments in developing countries have difficulty delivering such family support to the target population because of the technical problem of mapping the presence of mothers and fathers working in the informal sector in the absence of contractual arrangements. Parental leave systems require a sophisticated administration system tracking the parents' employment conditions and status.

Second, given a relatively high per-child cost, institutional services for children under three are also out of reach in most developing countries. As far as the care and education of young children in their first years is concerned, one feasible option is to educate parents in the basics of cleaning, feeding and interacting with children. Parent education, which does not require a sophisticated administration system, as it can be delivered non-formally, can have a substantial positive impact on early childhood development by making parents more effective early childhood educators. Parent education does not help solve the problem of the parents' non-availability but it makes them become more effective early childhood educators when available.

But, as argued above, mothers in disadvantaged situations, the main target population of parent education programmes, are not easily available to attend classes. For this reason, home-based programmes have been devised to mobilise mothers to serve as collective early childhood educators for groups of children in neighbourhood communities. Such an approach allows mothers to work while their children are under the care of someone with at least a minimum of training. However, home-based and parent education programmes should not be considered permanent alternatives to government spending on professional care and education for disadvantaged children. In addition, in order to ensure quality, these programmes, too, require government support and involvement to build the necessary administrative infrastructure.

Finally, in the long term, investment in the education of girls and women will have a synergistic effect on the development of ECCE-FBS. Mothers' education levels have been shown to have a negative correlation with their fertility rates: educated mothers produce fewer children. Smaller families in turn allow the government to increase per-child expenditures for early childhood services, thereby improving access and quality. Educated mothers do not require extensive parent education, nor do they need to be convinced of its importance as much as uneducated mothers do. Furthermore, educated mothers are far more likely to be employed in the formal sector,[10] and their presence as visible contributors to the economy increases the perceived demand for ECCE-FBS and prompts the government to deliver FBS services.

Government investment is a political decision arising from the determination of priorities. To trigger it, demand must be clearly communicated. Dire statistics on child development (e.g., infant mortality) may reveal the need for ECCE-FBS, but need alone, unfortunately, is not enough to win government investment. While mothers are not the sole beneficiaries of ECCE-FBS, they are the strategic beneficiaries in the sense that their voice can communicate the demand. In this regard, encouraging women, through good education, to participate more actively in the formal labour market is not only a sound economic strategy, but also a good strategy for ECCE-FBS. Likewise, investment in ECCE-FBS to reinforce positive child development is a sound economic strategy, given that it will translate into long-term savings on remedial social and educational programmes.

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[8] *Zambia Demographic Health Survey, 1996*. Central Statistics Zambia.
[9] Or at most age three.

[10] Across EU member states, mothers with high levels of education are 2-3 times more likely to work when they have a young child than mothers with a low level of education.

* We wish to acknolwedge Dr. Val Podmore of Victoria University, New Zealand, who provided useful reference materials for Briefs no. 4 and 5.

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United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

n°6 / September 2002

UNESCO Policy Briefs on Early Childhood

Home-Based Early Childhood Services: The Case of New Zealand

The main purpose of this policy note is to outline information about New Zealand home-based services. It highlights the importance of Government's role in supporting the quality of provision for children in home-based care, and it is intended to be of use to other countries developing home-based education and care policies. Increasingly, home-based services in New Zealand are education-oriented, and cater for diversity. The note summarises key details and implications about participation and administration (funding, review, regulation, staff qualifications, and curriculum).

Definition

Home-based care involves the care and education of a small group of children in a caregiver's home. These services (also known as "family day care") are defined by the Ministry of Education as "a cluster of homes under the supervision of a homebased coordinator. The coordinator places children with caregivers in approved homes for an agreed number of hours per week."[1] Unlike private services in a child's own home (employment of a nanny, or in some countries, employment of servants) used mainly by the more privileged, home-based care caters for a wide range of families.

Development and Participation

During the late 20th century in New Zealand, as in other industrialised countries, the rising participation rates of children in early childhood education services has developed alongside increased participation of women in the labour market. In 2001, the apparent participation in early childhood services of children aged from birth to five years reached 60%. In the 1990 to 2001 period, the percentage of growth of enrolments in home-based services exceeded that of all other early childhood services (see Table 1). The main reason for the increase in enrolments in home-based services (and in "education and care services"), and for the decrease in enrolments at playcentres (parent co-operative centres with parent involvement in running the programme) was the rise in mothers' participation in paid work. Parents of infants and toddlers sometimes choose a home-based service, rather than a centre, because they prefer a home environment.[2]

By 2001, there were 184 home-based services operating in New Zealand, catering for 8,546 children aged from birth to 5 years. The major clientele of home-based care services are New Zealand European children and Maori children (7,015 and 1,012 respectively in 2001).[3] Slightly more boys than girls were enrolled (4,405 males and 4,141 females in 2001). In 2001, there were 282 coordinators of home-based services; all of them were women.

Table 1: Number of Early Childhood Enrolments in New Zealand By Type Of Service, with Percentage of Change 1990 & 2001

Type of Service[4]	1990	2001	% change
Licensed early childhood services			
Kindergarten	43,792	45,439	3.8
Playcentres	22,668	14,786	-34.8
Education and care services	29,786	73,192	145.7
Home-based services	1,611	8,546	430.5
Correspondence school*	861	947	10.0
Te Kohanga Reo	10,108	9,594	-5.1
License-exempt EC services			
Early childhood development funded			
-Playgroups	5,565	15,457	177.8
-Nga Puna Kohungahunga**	..	209	..
-Pacific Islands EC groups	2,729	2,545	-6.7
-Playcentres	..	404	..
Licence-exempt Kohanga Reo	..	214	..
Total	117,120	171,333	46.3

*.. not available / ...not applicable / *includes dual enrolments / ** included in Playgroups in previous years.*

Data source: New Zealand Ministry of Education Data Management Unit, July 2002

Administration, Funding, Regulation, and Qualifications

Prior to 1986 in New Zealand, the Department of Social Welfare was mainly responsible for administration of home-based early childhood services. In 1986, responsibility for childcare (including home-based services) moved formally from the Department of Social

[1] *Http:www.minedu.govt.nz/web/document/document_page.cfn?id=6189&p=1037.3832.6120/*

[2] Callister, P. & Podmore, V. N. et al., (1995). *Striking a balance: Families, work, and early childhood education*.Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

[3] *Http:www.minedu.govt.nz*

[4] Summary definitions of these services include:
Kindergartens: free standing, community run, sessional centres (governed by regional associations) for 3- and 4-year-olds. *Playcentres*: parent-cooperative, sessional centres (governed by regional associations) for children from birth to school entry. The educators and administrators are parents of enrolled children. *Education and care centres*: Childcare centres, with diverse ownership and governance arrangements, full-day care or sessional care. *Home-based care*: Family day care, often under the auspices of Barnardo's NZ in recent decades. *Correspondence School*: distance early education provided by the state correspondence school. *Te Kohanga Reo*: involve total immersion of children from birth to school age in Maori culture, language, and values. Centres are governed by a national body of venerable Maori elders. The educators and administrators are parents or elders of the children.

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Welfare to the Department of Education.[5] The Ministry of Education is currently responsible for administration and (partial) funding of the home-based education and care services. Each home-based scheme receives the same level of funding, per child per hour, as that available to centre-based services. Funding levels are therefore linked to participation rates. As the home-based enrolments have increased relative to other services (Table 1), so too have the funding levels.

The rise in early childhood services, including home-based services, has been accompanied by research, lobbying, and government initiatives aimed to enhance the quality of services. Research studies of family daycare in North America support the importance of: licensing and regulation of services, qualifications of providers, and commitment of providers to taking care of children and to learning about children's development and care.[6] Few New Zealand studies have focused specifically on quality in home-based settings,[7] but some small-scale, in-depth studies are now in progress. New Zealand Government initiatives to promote and monitor the quality of the services provided include requirements regarding: reviews, regulations, and qualifications.

Home-based services, along with other early childhood services receiving government funding subsidies, are reviewed externally by the Education Review Office (ERO), the government department with responsibility for reporting publicly on the quality of education in early childhood services/schools. ERO evaluates the safety of children, learning programmes, and the performance of management. Home-based early childhood services are regulated in accordance with the Education (Home Based Care) Order 1992. The Order specifies requirements for premises and facilities, and states that each coordinator must hold a qualification approved by the Secretary (the head of the Ministry of Education). However, to date no formal early childhood qualification requirements are specified for home-based caregivers. Changes to qualifications, requiring a Diploma of Teaching (ECE) or equivalent for coordinators in home-based services, are currently being implemented.[8] A recent strategic plan report to the Minister of Education recommends that the system of qualifications for home-based educators needs further development. The new qualifications requirements for coordinators of home-based services are identical to those required for persons responsible for early childhood centres. There is a national, bicultural early childhood curriculum framework (*Te Whaariki*)in place for all early childhood services. *Te Whaariki* was developed in partnership with Maori (the indigenous people), and is inclusive of home-based services. Policy initiatives are also in place to encourage improved outcomes for children through educators' self-evaluation.

Implications

What are the implications for countries where home-based programmes are in the hands of individuals, with no administration and funding from government? In New Zealand as in other countries where governments are responding to research on the educational and social benefits of high quality early childhood education and care services for young children, priorities are to increase participation and to enhance the quality of a diverse range of services. Integral parts of meeting these priorities potentially include:

- developing appropriate administrative infrastructures, regulations, curriculum, and support systems;
- fostering quality through education (qualifications of coordinators and caregivers, and ongoing professional development).

These requirements are important, to avoid problems of administrative fragmentation, and most importantly to enhance quality. A key reason for Government support and regulation is that the quality of early childhood services, including home-based services, is linked to long-term educational and social benefits for children and families.

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[5] Meade, A. & Podmore, V. N. (2002). *Early childhood education policy co-ordination under the auspices of the Department/Ministry of Education: A case study of New Zealand.* UNESCO Early Childhood and Family Policy Series No. 1. Paris, France.

[6] e.g., Galinsky, E., Howes, C., Kontos, S., & Shim, M. (1994). *The study of children in family child care and relative care.* New York: Families and Work Institute.

[7] Everiss (1999). *Bringing it back to mind: Two decades of family day care development in New Zealand.* Occasional paper No. 5. Wellington: Institute for Early Childhood Studies, Victoria University.

[8] A diploma-level qualification requires at least 2 years of full-time (or equivalent) study at an approved tertiary institution.

[9] The author acknowledges Dr Anne Meade and Jane Couch, who helpfully previewed an earlier draft of this brief.

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

n°7 / October 2002

UNESCO Policy Briefs on Early Childhood

Papua New Guinea's Vernacular Language Preschool Programme

Cultural and linguistic diversity occurs for a variety of reasons. In developed countries these often include influxes of immigrants, refugees and international students, while a large number of developing nations have long contained several language groups within their borders. Among the challenges of educating young children in such settings are promoting a national identity, encouraging participation in national life, dealing with globalisation, language and culture issues, delivering services to both rural and urban areas, and distributing fiscal resources.

Some countries are seeking to address these challenges through a bilingual education policy. Such a strategy extends basic education to everyone. This goal cannot be accomplished unless minority or vernacular languages are included in the formal education system.

Papua New Guinea (PNG), an island nation in the South Pacific north of Australia and east of Indonesia, is one developing country with a bilingual education policy. A reform of the country's English-only educational system was launched in 1995 after a non-formal community-based vernacular language preschool movement spread throughout PNG. Government policy henceforth required the national formal education system to include vernacular language education in the initial years of a child's education, and to implement a gradual transition to the use of English as one of the languages of instruction.

Papua New Guinea is unique in a number of ways compared with other developing countries. It is the world's most linguistically diverse nation, with 823 living languages spoken by a population of 5.2 million (2000 PNG Census). Only 50,000 people speak English as their first language. The population of each language group is small compared with other indigenous languages around the world, and 80 percent of the PNG population resides in the rural areas. Since the largest language group has only 165,000 speakers, none is numerically or politically dominant. Multilingualism is common, with many people speaking their first language, one or both of the lingua francas, Melanesian Pidgin and Hiri Motu, and/or the official language, English. It is important to note that in PNG, English is learned in a foreign language context, mostly through the education system, and not in a second language context. Most people have little exposure to English unless they live close to towns.

From 1870 until the 1950s, the majority of schools in PNG were established by missions and the vernacular languages were used as the language of instruction. An English-only policy was adopted in the 1950s. At PNG's independence in 1975, the policy was reviewed but maintained under the 1976 Education Plan. Instruction in the vernacular languages was reinstated in 1995.[1]

In 1979, parents on Bougainville Island, in North Solomons Province, expressed concern that the English-only school system was alienating their children from their own language and culture. Children who did not pass secondary school entrance examinations had to return to their villages, but they were unable to reintegrate into village life. The Bougainville Islanders proposed giving their children two years of preschool education in their own language before the first grade of primary schooling, in which the language of instruction was English. The *Viles Tok Ples Skul* (VTPS) ("village language school") scheme thus emerged as a non-formal community-based vernacular language preschool education option. Later, it became known as *Tok Ples Pri Skul* (TPPS) ("vernacular language preschools").

The government of North Solomons Province committed ample personnel and budgetary resources to this programme, with a non-governmental organisation (NGO) helping to prepare the necessary literacy materials in the vernacular languages. During the 1980s, three other provincial governments and four other language communities followed the North Solomons initiative. Vernacular language preschools quickly spread throughout the country, with NGOs playing a vital role in most of these programmes. Community members and NGOs promoted vernacular preschooling even in provinces whose governments were initially not supportive of the idea. The involvement of communities, provincial governments and NGOs in the vernacular language preschool movement later became part of the government's Education Reform policy. These groups invested time, money and personnel in the planning and implementing of the programmes in their respective areas.

From 1979 to 1995, the vernacular language preschool programmes remained in the realm of non-formal education. They did not have standard curriculum requirements, teacher selection criteria or common teacher

[1] Litteral, R. (2000). *Basic Education in Papua New Guinea: Past, Present and Future.* Paper presented at the First Faculty of Humanities Conference Bridging Borders/Moving Boundaries: Defining/Redefining the Humanities into the New Millennium, 30 October-3 November 2000, University of Goroka, Goroka, Papua New Guinea.

preparation courses. Students could complete a preschool programme in one or two years. The teachers were less highly trained than certified primary school teachers. Many were volunteers, especially in the communities or provinces that did not offer financial support.

A review of the VTPS programme found not only that children who had attended a village vernacular preschool before entering the first grade experienced distinct educational advantages, but also that their communities enjoyed social and cultural benefits (Delpit and Kemelfield, 1985).[2] Primary school teachers noticed that the transition to the English-only classroom was much easier for children who had attended the vernacular language preschools compared with those with no previous educational experience. Community members and elders, even those who could not read and write themselves, were invited into the classrooms to pass on important cultural knowledge and information to the children.

In July 1991, following the proliferation of vernacular preschools in PNG, officials from national and provincial departments of education unanimously agreed that the formal education system needed restructuring. This eventually led to the 1995 Education (Amendment) Act. The Education Reform, designed to improve educational access, equity and quality, encourages vernacular language instruction in the first three grades of a child's education (Elementary-Prep, Elementary-1, Elementary-2). Oral English is introduced as part of the Elementary-2 curriculum. The lower primary grades (3-5) are taught in the vernacular language and English. This is followed by a gradual transition to English with each successive grade spending more time using English as the medium of instruction (third grade 60% vernacular, 40% English; fourth grade 40% vernacular, 60% English, and fifth grade 30% vernacular, 70% English). By 1997, each of the 20 provinces had begun implementing a nationally approved Provincial Education Plan.

The Education Reform policy recognises the important roles played by the community, NGOs, and the government in the development, dissemination and implementation of the vernacular language preschool programmes. It encourages these stakeholders to continue their involvement. The National Department of Education sets curriculum guidelines and the criteria for the selection of teachers and teacher trainers. For its part, the Provincial Department of Education has the task of implementing the Education Reform according to its own plan. The provincial and district teacher trainers plan and organise the training courses. Once new elementary schools are approved and registered, and the teachers are trained, they can begin to hold elementary classes in the vernacular languages. Community members are encouraged to build the elementary classrooms, nominate the teachers and help them develop culturally relevant curricula.

Conflicts occurred when some community members and NGOs objected that the government intervened to take over a programme they had developed themselves. One example was in East New Britain Province, the last to start implementing the Education Reform. The provincial government and local communities had experienced the success of developing preschools through their own efforts, and they were reluctant to let the national government control their schools. Since Education Reform policy permits but does not require the inclusion of vernacular language preschools in the elementary school system, some provinces incorporated them and their teachers, while others did not.

The key elements of PNG's Education Reform are the encouragement of early education in the vernacular languages and a gradual bridging to English as a language of wider communication. It also includes the development of a culturally relevant curriculum and materials, and the availability of nine years of basic education instead of six, closer to the child's village home. At the end of 2000, the Education Reform involved 380 languages groups. In PNG's experience, a village-level non-formal vernacular language preschool movement, with minimally trained teachers, eventually guided the entire nation to launch an ambitious drive to provide education in the language children know first and best, their own. They are then better prepared cognitively, developmentally and academically to transfer the learning of skills in their own language to learning in English.

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The *UNESCO Policy Briefs on Early Childhood* is a series of short, flash notes on early childhood and family policy issues. It seeks to answer various questions that policy makers have about the planning and implementation of early childhood and family policies. For further information and the electronic version of the *Briefs*, please check:

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[2] Delpit, L., and Kemelfield, G. (1985). *An Evaluation of the Viles TokPles Skul Scheme in the North Solomons Province.* ERU Report No. 51, University of Papua New Guinea.

[3] Formely the Summer Institute of Linguistics

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

n°8 / November – December 2002

UNESCO Policy Briefs on Early Childhood

Social Transformations and Their Implications for the Global Demand for ECCE

As policy makers plan for the development over the next decade of early childhood care and education (ECCE) programs, it will be critical to have information on the trends that are likely to dramatically affect demand for ECCE, in order to develop adequate plans to increase the supply of available, accessible, affordable, quality services. Several major global demographic forces are transforming the demand for early childhood services. These forces include rapid urbanization, the movement of men and women from agricultural to nonagricultural work and from informal to formal sector work, and the need for a more highly educated workforce in order to compete effectively in a globalized economy.

The United Nations estimates that by the year 2030, more than 56% of the developing world's population will live in cities. Only 18% of the world's population lived in urban areas at the beginning of the twentieth century. But by the century's close nearly half of the world's population did. The greatest changes in the developing world occurred in the last fifty years. Why does urbanization matter to children under five? Often, when adults move to cities they become separated from their extended families. At the same time as being less able to rely on extended family for help, parents living in the city are more likely to work in the formal labor force—and even those that do work in the informal labor force are more likely to work at jobs where it is difficult or impossible for them to bring young children to work safely. The transformation in where families with young children live has been accompanied by an equally marked transformation in where adults work. Men have moved increasingly out of agricultural and into industrial and post-industrial economics. The movement of fathers away from work to which their children might accompany them, towards work that occurs away from home and family has been accompanied by the increased participation of women in the paid labor force.

While data have been available on demographic trends in the labor force, the existing studies have not examined how many children under five are now as a consequence being reared in households in which all adults work. Several years ago, I founded the Project on Global Working Families, which is based at Harvard University but has had field staff around the world to begin to answer this and related questions about the experiences of children and adults living in working families worldwide.[i] Among other projects, the research team I lead has been analyzing large household surveys from nations in Latin America, Africa, Asia, North America, and Europe. More detailed findings will be reported elsewhere;[ii,iii] this policy brief series will focus on the early findings relevant to the availability of family members to provide early childhood care.

In Mexico, we analyzed data on a national survey of over fourteen thousand households in the Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares. While a substantial number of children were being raised in extended family households, in 38% of households with children under the age of five, all adults were working for pay. In 21% of households with one or more children between the ages of zero and five, there were two working parents living with no extended family; in 3% of families young children lived with a single working parent; and in 14% of households parents lived with extended family members but all adults between the ages of 25 and 55 were in the workforce.

In the studies we have conducted in other nations, even higher percentages of homes with young children had all adults in the labor force. Using the Multiple Indicator Survey conducted by the Central Statistics Office, we examined the experience of 6,188 families in Botswana. In 44% of the households with children age zero to five, all adults worked. While it was again fairly common for children zero to five to live with extended family, in nearly half of the cases all members of both the nuclear and extended family between the ages of 25 and 55 were employed. The numbers were similarly high for Brazil and Russia. In 42% of households with young children in Brazil, all adults between the ages of 25 and 55 were working. In 52% of households in Russia in which there were young children, all adults between the ages of 25 and 55 were working. The numbers were even higher in Vietnam. In 88% of households with young children, all adults were working.

Important regional differences remain that are relevant to caregiving. These range from the far more rapid growth of the elderly population in industrialized countries to the tragically high caregiving burden due to the higher rates of diseases such as HIV/AIDS[iv] in the southern cone of Africa. Still, in spite of important regional differences, there are clearly demographic commonalities that will fundamentally shape the need for early childhood care and education. Across diverse national settings, a substantial percentage of young children are being raised in households in which all adults work.

To better understand how the changes in parental work are affecting the care and education of young children currently, our Project on Global Working Families has conducted in-depth interviews of nearly 1000 parents, child care and health care providers in five regions. Early findings are reported here.[v]

Where working families lacked access to child care centers, we found the early care and education of a significant number of their children suffered in at least three ways. First, children five years old and younger were left home alone or in the care of young school age children. In some families, young children were left home alone routinely and in other families intermittently. In numerous cases this resulted in serious preventable illness and injury. Second, children were brought to work even when the circumstances at work made this detrimental to the young child's development. Third, children were left in informal care settings with inadequate care providers. In-depth interviews revealed that the informal care which low-income working parents could afford was often of extremely poor quality.

In Mexico, 23% of families we interviewed who had preschool age children had left them home alone or in the care of their siblings. In Botswana, 29% of families who had at least one child five years old or younger had left children home alone or in the care of each other. In Vietnam, where a high percentage of families (56%) had access to and had used formal child care, only 9% of parents who had at least one child five or younger had left their children home alone or in the care of their siblings. Grandparents and other extended family often lived too far from working parents to assist with the care of young children. Even those who live nearby may end up leaving young children unsupervised for reasons ranging from their own poor health and need of assistance to the fact that they themselves must work to survive. In Mexico, 45% of the parents we interviewed who had children between the ages of zero and five had had to bring children to work regularly. In Botswana, while the number was lower, 9% of parents of young children still had to bring their child to work regularly. While further detailed studies, including large national surveys, are needed both to provide greater detail on the circumstances in which children are left and precise national estimates, these preliminary findings clearly document the existence of important problems.

There are several implications from the combined national survey and in-depth interview findings. First, transformations in the nature and location of parental work are limiting the availability of both fathers and mothers to care for young children. Second, extended family members are often not filling the gaps in care for young children because urbanization is separating nuclear and extended families in the location of their residence and because adult members of extended families are also often working. Third, in the absence of services, preschool children's health and development are placed at risk when they are left alone, in the care of other young children, or brought to work settings where parents cannot adequately care for them. Together our findings document a large and growing need for improved care for young children in working families. This care should include both the opportunity for parental care made possible by paid parental leave—particularly important in the case of infants and sick children—and ECCE services. Not only do the demographic trends underscore the large and growing demand for ECCE, but extensive research documents the enormous cognitive, social, and emotional developmental benefits of quality early childhood care and education. Moreover, both because of its role in supporting parental work and in improving children's educational outcomes, affordable, high quality ECCE plays an essential role in increasing countries' ability to compete in the global economy.

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[i] For further information on the Project on Global Working Families see www.globalworkingfamilies.org

[ii] The detailed findings from these in-depth interviews will be reported in full in a forthcoming book in 2004 with Oxford University Press.

[iii] Early findings are also reported in Heymann, SJ, Fischer, A and Engelman, M. Labor Conditions and the Health of Children, Elderly and Disabled Family Members. In *Global Inequalities at Work: The Impact of Work on the Health of Individuals, Families, and Societies*, edited by SJ Heymann. New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2003.

[iv] A future policy brief will deal with the intersection of the AIDS epidemic and the need for early childhood care and education.

[v] In each of the countries discussed in this policy brief, parents attending outpatient health clinics in selected cities and towns were interviewed in depth. Response rates were greater than 80% at each location. The findings clearly highlight the existence of a significant problem. While the samples were both unusually representative and reasonably substantial for in-depth interviews, it will be important to conduct larger, nationally representative closed-ended surveys to estimate frequencies with greater precision.

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PS031505